CLAIMS

1.   A method for exchanging telecommunications service information between a telecommunications wholesaler and a telecommunications reseller, the method comprising:

(a)   interfacing by the telecommunications reseller with an end user about at least one retail telecommunications product or service;

(b)   establishing a real-time electronic interface between the telecommunications wholesaler and the telecommunications reseller;

(c)   electronically transferring a message during a session after establishing the real-time electronic interface, the message including information for: (i) the end user, (ii) the at least one retail telecommunications product or service and (iii) at least one telecommunications reseller reference, the message formatted in a telecommunications wholesaler format;

(d)   receiving a response to the message, the response formatted in the telecommunications wholesaler format and the response generated free of human intervention.

2.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

(e)   translating the information from a telecommunications reseller format to the telecommunications wholesaler format prior to (c); and

(f)   translating the response from the telecommunications wholesaler format to the telecommunications reseller format.

3.   The method of Claim 1 wherein (c) comprises transmitting the response via a TCP/IP connection.

4.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

(e)   determining whether the telecommunications product or service is available as a function of an address of the end user of the telecommunications reseller, a central office which services the address and capabilities of any switch within the central office.

5.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

(e)   periodically transferring an address validation file from the telecommunications wholesaler to the telecommunications reseller, the address validation file

including information for a particular geographic area relative to valid address numbers, street names, and street directions.

6.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

(e)   periodically transferring a feature availability file from the telecommunications wholesaler to the telecommunications reseller, the feature availability file including information related to features available for a particular switch and an associated central office.

7.   The method of Claim 6 wherein determining whether the requested service is available is performed by the telecommunications reseller using a previously transferred feature availability file.

8.   The method of Claim 1 wherein the message includes information associated with a request to determine availability of a telephone number, further comprising (e) comparing the telephone number to a store of available telephone numbers, and wherein the response is indicative of the availability of the requested telephone number during the session.

9.   The method of Claim 8 wherein (e) comprises identifying a plurality of available telephone numbers and wherein the response indicates the plurality of available telephone numbers.

10.   The method of Claim 1 wherein (a) comprises gathering data for a plurality of end users, further comprising (e) collecting the data in a document, wherein the message is responsive to the document, the message including a plurality of segments with each segment associated with different end users.

11.   A system for exchanging telecommunications service information between a telecommunications wholesaler and a telecommunications reseller, the system comprising:

a computer operable to receive data from an interface of the telecommunications reseller with an end user about at least one retail telecommunications product or service, establish a real-time electronic interface between the telecommunications wholesaler and the telecommunications reseller, electronically transferring a message during a session after

establishing the real-time electronic interface, the message including information for: (i) the end user, (ii) the at least one retail telecommunications product or service and (iii) at least one telecommunications reseller reference, the message formatted in a telecommunications wholesaler format, and receiving a response to the message, the response formatted in the telecommunications wholesaler format and the response generated free of human intervention.

12.   The system of Claim 11 further comprising a telecommunications reseller server operable to translate the information from a telecommunications reseller format to the telecommunications wholesaler format and translate the response from the telecommunications wholesaler format to the telecommunications reseller format.

13.   The system of Claim 11 wherein the computer is operable to transmit the response via a TCP/IP connection.

14.   The system of Claim 11 wherein the computer is operable to determine whether the telecommunications product or service is available as a function of an address of the end user of the telecommunications reseller, a central office which services the address and capabilities of any switch within the central office.

15.   The system of Claim 11 wherein the computer is operable to periodically transfer an address validation file from the telecommunications wholesaler to the telecommunications reseller, the address validation file including information for a particular geographic area relative to valid address numbers, street names, and street directions.

16.   A computer readable storage medium having stored therein data representing instructions executable by a computer for exchanging telecommunications service information between a telecommunications wholesaler and a telecommunications reseller, the storage medium including instructions for:

interfacing by the telecommunications reseller with an end user about at least one retail telecommunications product or service;

establishing a real-time electronic interface between the telecommunications wholesaler and the telecommunications reseller;

electronically transferring a message during a session after establishing the real-time electronic interface, the message including information for: (i) the end user, (ii) the at least one retail telecommunications product or service and (iii) at least one telecommunications reseller reference, the message formatted in a telecommunications wholesaler format;

receiving a response to the message, the response formatted in the telecommunications wholesaler format and the response generated free of human intervention.

17.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 16 further comprising instructions for translating the information from a telecommunications reseller format to the telecommunications wholesaler format and translating the response from the telecommunications wholesaler format to the telecommunications reseller format.

18.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 16 wherein the instructions include instructions for transmitting the response via a TCP/IP connection.   ·

19.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 16 further comprising instructions for determining whether the telecommunications product or service is available as a function of an address of the end user of the telecommunications reseller, a central office which services the address and capabilities of any switch within the central office.

20.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 16 further comprising instructions for periodically transferring an address validation file from the telecommunications wholesaler to the telecommunications reseller, the address validation file including information for a particular geographic area relative to valid address numbers, street names, and street directions.

21.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 16 further comprising instructions for periodically transferring a feature availability file from the telecommunications wholesaler to the telecommunications reseller, the feature availability file including information related to features available for a particular switch and an associated central office.